

GREEN POWER News

WAPA's Renewable Resources Program covering
green power, reports, studies and funding

WESTERN AREA POWER ADMINISTRATION

Welcome to the *Green Power News Update*. This is a summary of the stories that ran during **December 2016**. New stories are added throughout the month to make sure you always know what is happening in our fast-changing industry. Check back often to see what's new!

Individuals or agencies sending press releases quoted here are entirely responsible for the accuracy of their information.

[Contact us](#)[Subscribe](#)[Previous issues](#)

[In this issue:](#)

Green Power

- Five Major Businesses Powered by Renewable Energy
- IRS Updates "Beginning of Construction" Guidance
- Clean Energy News and Events for State and Local Leaders for December 2016
- The CESA Brief
- Solar Consumer Protection webinar recording available
- Local governments move to break PG&E monopoly
- 75-MW Solar Farm Kicks in for TVA

Reports and Studies

- Green Power Partnership Update for November
- Accurate Solar Energy Forecasting Could Save Ratepayers Millions
- Presentations from 2016 Office of Indian Energy Program Review Meeting now online
- Give input on public solar data file

Funding

- Weekly Federal Funding Opportunities Update

Green Power

Five Major Businesses Powered by Renewable Energy

Major businesses are embracing renewable energy in a big way – and discovering there’s an awful lot of green to be made in a clean energy-powered economy.

More and more businesses in the US and abroad are embracing sustainable practices as they begin to feel the impacts of the climate crisis where it matters most: their bottom lines.

As wind and solar energy achieve cost competitiveness with fossil fuels and investors wake up to the long-term risks of continuing to power their businesses in ways that impact the environment, addressing the climate crisis has become an economic imperative.

Consequently, many major businesses are embracing renewable energy in a big way, and many are finding that there’s an awful lot of green to be made in a renewable energy-powered economy.

Source: The Climate Reality Project, 11/25/16

IRS Updates “Beginning of Construction” Guidance

The IRS has issued highly anticipated guidance updating the “beginning of construction” requirement for the production tax credit (PTC) under Section 45 of the Internal Revenue Code (the Code) and the investment tax credit (ITC) under Section 48 of the Code. Notice 2016-31 updates the IRS’s prior guidance to reflect the extension of the PTC and ITC that was enacted at the end of 2015, and also addresses a number of other issues taxpayers may encounter when determining whether they qualify for the PTC or ITC.

Notice 2016-31 addresses certain issues raised by the extension of the PTC and ITC that was enacted as part of the Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes Act of 2015 (the “PATH Act”). As we noted in our December 16, 2015, update, the legislation extended the availability of the PTC or ITC for wind facilities with respect to which construction begins before January 1, 2020, subject to a 20%-per-year reduction in the credit amount for facilities for which construction begins after December 31, 2016 (i.e., a 20% reduction for a facility the construction of which begins in 2017, a 40% reduction for a facility the construction of which begins in 2018, and a 60% reduction for a facility the construction of which begins in 2019). In the case of geothermal, landfill gas, trash, marine, and hydrokinetic facilities and certain closed-loop biomass, open-loop biomass, and qualified hydropower facilities, a taxpayer is eligible to claim the PTC or ITC if construction begins before January 1, 2017, with no phase-out.

Source: Stoel Rives LLP, 5/6/16

Clean Energy News and Events for State and Local Leaders for December 2016

A monthly update from EERE's Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs Office (WIP) for state, local, and K-12 officials featuring resources to advance successful, high-impact, and long-lasting clean energy policies, programs, and projects.

Source: DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, 12/9/16

The CESA Brief

The CESA Brief e-newsletter provides periodic updates about the programs and accomplishments of the Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) and its member organizations.

Clean Energy States Alliance is a national nonprofit coalition of state and municipal clean energy funds working with federal, regional, industry, and other stakeholders to promote clean energy markets and technologies.

Source: Clean Energy States Alliance, 12/7/16

Solar Consumer Protection webinar recording available

The U.S. solar photovoltaics (PV) market has grown tremendously over the last decade. With hundreds of thousands of PV systems being installed annually, it is important that consumers are satisfied that the equipment they purchase will perform as advertised, and that they don't feel misled by unreliable vendors. Otherwise, long-term public support for solar could erode.

On this webinar, panelists from the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA), Consumers Union, and the Clean Energy States Alliance (CESA) presented their perspectives on solar consumer protection and discussed the work their organizations are doing to ensure that distributed PV remains consumer friendly. These presentations were followed by a Q&A with the audience.

Source: Clean Energy States Alliance, 12/8/16

Local governments move to break PG&E monopoly

Just a few months ago things looked shaky, with both the city of Salinas and Monterey County contemplating bowing out of a plan to break Pacific Gas & Electric's local monopoly.

The plan was to do it with clean energy.

But now, 19 local government have announced their intention of joining Monterey Bay Community Power to create a Community Choice Energy program—including the city of Salinas and Monterey County.

Source: Monterey County Weekly, 12/7/16

75-MW Solar Farm Kicks in for TVA

Officials at the Tennessee Valley Authority say the public power provider has taken a major step toward clean energy with the debut of a 75-megawatt solar farm in Alabama.

The huge project near Florence has more than 300,000 panels and should produce enough energy to power 15,000 homes.

Built by NextEra Energy Resources, the \$150 million farm spans 645 acres near cotton, corn and soybean fields. TVA will acquire all the output under a 20-year contract.

"TVA never stands still, and this NextEra Energy Resources project helps us meet our commitment to provide the 9 million people of the Tennessee Valley with reliable, low-cost, carbon-free electricity," said Van Wardlaw, executive vice president of external relations for TVA.

Source: Cooperative.com, 12/2/16

Green Power Partnership Update for November

Green Power Partnership (GPP) Program Updates are published monthly and provide the latest news and updates on the Partnership.

Sign up for Program Updates.

Issue 45, November 29, 2016

- Partner Spotlight – Walmart
- Welcome New Partners
- Congratulations to Partners Celebrating Their 10-Year Anniversary with the Green Power Partnership
- GPP by the Numbers
- 2017 Climate Leadership Conference Registration and Agenda
- Department of Energy's "Revolution...Now" Report and Video and Electrical Grid Infographic
- New Renewable Energy Project Development Tool Box
- DOE Launches Solar in Your Community Challenge

Source: US Environmental Protection Agency, 11/29/16

Find more [publications and webinars](#).

Reports and Studies

Accurate Solar Energy Forecasting Could Save Ratepayers Millions

A [2015 study](#) by the National Renewable Energy Laboratory and IBM found that more accurate day-ahead predictions of solar energy generation levels would save ratepayers in California \$5 million in avoided costs. Solar forecasts, which integrate weather patterns and solar production estimates to help grid managers predict how much solar energy will be produced across their system on a given day, allow utilities to better allocate resources and avoid the need to ramp up reserve power plants. But grid managers have run into a problem that's as old as time: it's hard to predict the future.

Source: DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, 12/23/16

Presentations from 2016 Office of Indian Energy Program Review Meeting now online

You can download presentations from the 2016 Office of Indian Energy Program Review held Nov. 14–17, 2016, in Denver, Colorado. Sort by topic, tribe, presenter, or presentation title.

Source: Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs, 12/8/16

Give input on public solar data file

Berkeley Lab's Electricity Markets and Policy Group has made available a new public data resource, containing data records for more than 800,000 distributed solar photovoltaic (PV) systems installed in the United States. In conjunction with the release of this public data file, the group is also soliciting suggestions from the solar industry and policy community for research questions that might be explored with this dataset.

The public data file is based on data collected and cleaned by Berkeley Lab for its annual Tracking the Sun report. The file includes more than 60 data fields describing key attributes of individual PV systems, including size, location, date of installation, installed price, equipment specifications, installer name and other details. The data file and accompanying User Guide can be accessed through the National Renewable Energy Laboratory's Open PV Project data portal.

The group is also "crowd-sourcing" possible research questions that might be explored with this dataset. Please offer suggestions via this [**short questionnaire**](#), and indicate whether you would be interested in serving as the client or participating in some other manner in the execution of the project.

Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory, 11/30/16

Find more [publications and webinars](#).

Funding

Weekly Federal Funding Opportunities Update

Twenty Six opportunities totaling over \$395 million in federal financial assistance were released this week, soliciting proposals in the major program areas of:

- Academic Programs
- Alternative & Renewable Energy
- Biofuels
- Chemical & Waste
- Cybersecurity
- Energy Efficiency
- Environment

- Hydropower
- Native Affairs
- Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Transportation
- Transportation & Infrastructure
- Water
- Wildlife, Conservation, & Fisheries

Source: VanNess Feldman, 12/7/16

Find more [funding sources](#).